

From the University of Mississippi Medical Center Division of Public Affairs

MAJOR DONATION BY HEALTH MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATES TO AID JACKSON FREE CLINIC

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JACKSON, Miss. – A \$150,000 donation today by Health Management Associates Inc. to a fundraising campaign for the Jackson Free Clinic will help double the size of the student-run indigent-care facility.

Executives from HMA presented Free Clinic student leaders with the donation during a news conference at the clinic.

"Having this opportunity to help the Jackson Free Clinic as they expand their facility is truly an honor for us at Health Management," said Tim Mitchell, Jackson network CEO for Health Management. "As a company deeply rooted in Mississippi, we are always looking for ways to offer the best and most accessible health care to the communities we serve. We are grateful that the Jackson Free Clinic has allowed us to be a part of their vision to do the same."

HMA owns five hospitals in the metro area: Madison River Oaks Medical Center, Central Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson, Women's and River Oaks hospitals, both in Flowood, and Crossgates River Oaks Hospital in Brandon.

"We're elated and so grateful to receive such a large donation to support our campaign and ultimately our patients. With this gift we have met our fundraising goal and additionally established a lasting rapport with an amazing organization, which like us, serves to better the health of Mississippi," said Bobby Tullos, Jackson Free Clinic director and fourth-year University of Mississippi School of Medicine student.

The Jackson Free Clinic currently uses only half the space in the building it owns near the intersection of Fortification Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.

The expansion and renovation, scheduled to start in June, will take two-to-three months. The changes will double the usable square footage to 5,152 and provide space for dental, occupational therapy and physical therapy services.

As well, the project will:

- Increase the number of examination rooms from five to 10
- Provide a classroom for patient and student education
- Upgrade laboratory facilities
- Increase the waiting room size
- Provide a community conference room
- Upgrade restrooms
- Meet all handicap standards
- Expand diagnostic and volunteer subspecialty services
- Double the number of patients the clinic can see

The 12-year-old Jackson Free Clinic is a not-for-profit that serves adult patients who don't have health insurance and can't otherwise afford care. School of Medicine students staff the clinic under the supervision of licensed physician volunteers from the Jackson community. All the clinic's services are free.

On a yearly budget of about \$30,000, the clinic provides examinations, medications, lab work, diagnostic services and health education for patients. While both the clinic's volunteer base and patient load grew through the past decade, its facilities have not.

Through the fundraising campaign, First Choice, Jackson Free Clinic board members had hoped to raise at least \$300,000 to cover the cost of construction.

"We've reached our goal of \$300,000, thanks to generous donations from HMA, Medical Center donors and many people in the UMMC and Jackson community," Tullos said. "We are continuing the campaign to raise funds for equipment, supplies and overhead costs."

Architects Richard McNeel and Melissa Edwards at JBMH Architects in downtown Jackson donated their services to design and plan the renovations.

Contractor Ray Floyd of Jackson-based Fountain Construction organized subcontractors and developed an at-cost plan for the construction. The facility will be medical grade and meet all state and federal requirements.

The School of Medicine donated \$150,000 to the clinic's campaign in February, funding the school had accrued through undirected donations.

"The volunteers at the Jackson Free Clinic provide important services to the community so we're glad to be a part of their expansion campaign and we are thrilled to see the clinic receive such generous support from our health-care colleagues at Health Management," said Dr. James Keeton, UMMC vice chancellor for health affairs and dean of the School of Medicine.

At a reception on May 1 to thank numerous community and UMMC donors, students from the physical and occupational therapy programs presented a \$50,000 check to the JFC on behalf of the University of Mississippi School of Health Related Professions (SHRP).

Both the occupational therapy and physical therapy programs are housed within SHRP. When the renovated clinic reopens, therapy students from those programs will be able to volunteer and get hands-on experience.

The Jackson Free Clinic Board is also working toward integrating other UMMC programs including students in SHRP's Health Informatics and Information Management program and the Schools of Pharmacy and Dentistry.

While the construction project is under way, the clinic will continue operations on its normal 11:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. Saturday schedule from a temporary location at 809 N. State St. in Jackson. For more information about the Jackson Free Clinic or how to donate, visit www.jacksonfreeclinic.com.

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